

# Oregon Historic Site Form

Imbrie, Frank, Farmstead  
4045 Cornelius Pass Rd  
Hillsboro, Washington County

## LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 445 NW Cornelius Pass Rd ☐ apprx. addr

historic name: Imbrie, Frank, Farmstead

Hillsboro ☐ vcnt Washington County

current/  
other names:

### Optional Information

assoc addresses:  
(former addresses, intersections, etc.)

location descr:  
(remote sites)

block nbr: \_\_\_\_\_ lot nbr: \_\_\_\_\_ tax lot nbr: \_\_\_\_\_

township: 1N range: 2 W section: 23 1/4: \_\_\_\_\_

zip: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: building height (# stories): 2

total # eligible resources: 4 total # ineligible resources: ☐

elig. evaluation: eligible/significant

NR status: Individually Listed

primary constr date: 1866 (c.) ☐ secondary date: 1913 (c.) ☐  
(optional--use for major addns)

NR date listed: 2/15/1977 (indiv listed only; see  
Grouping for hist dist)

primary orig use: Agric. Outbuilding

orig use comments: \_\_\_\_\_

secondary orig use: \_\_\_\_\_

primary style: Italianate

prim style comments: \_\_\_\_\_

secondary style: \_\_\_\_\_

sec style comments: \_\_\_\_\_

primary siding: Wood:Other/Undefined

siding comments: \_\_\_\_\_

secondary siding: \_\_\_\_\_

plan type: \_\_\_\_\_

architect: Unknown

builder: Unknown

comments/notes: CR-B

## GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name: Hillsboro Local Inventory Update 2008 2008 Survey & Inventory Project

farmstead/cluster name: Imbrie Farm

external site #: \_\_\_\_\_  
(ID# used in city/agency database)

## SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: 2/15/1977 NRI

ILS survey date: \_\_\_\_\_

RLS survey date: \_\_\_\_\_

Gen File date: \_\_\_\_\_

106 Project(s)



East façade of house

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## ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

(Include expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings, and alterations)

### Architectural Description:

The property consists of a house, octagonal barn, grainery and orchards. The frame house was built c.1866 in the manner popularized by Calvert Vaux's architectural design book *Villas and Cottages*. It is a typical two-story Italian Villa with attic and cellar. It's dimensions, excluding porches, are 25' x 42'. The rooms are arranged semiformaly around a stair hall. The center three bays of the main façade are projected under a gable. The main story includes a living room, formal hall, family room, dining room, pantry, kitchen and bath. The upstairs is composed of three bedrooms, each with an adjoining room. There is a formal stairway leading upstairs from the front hall and another stairway from the pantry.

The front porch is 10' x 16'. It has a parapet, and its members are simple and squared, compared to the finishing of the cornice, doors, window framements, etc. The railing is crudely nailed to the façade. Access to the roof of the porch is given by a door aligned with the entry in the upper story. The back porch is about eight feet square. A garage is attached to the rear of the house by a causeway roof. Of the foundation, a thirty-inch ground course of brick is exposed. It is faced with stucco laid in a rectangular pattern and articulated by expansion joints.

The exterior trim is in keeping with the keynote of the Italian Villa mode, namely the allusion to Renaissance detailing. All corners are decorated with staggered quoining of wood. Under the cornice is a deep, molded entablature, and decorated brackets. At the time the exterior was covered with composition siding, care was taken to replace the quoins. The window framements consist of lintels, brackets, and kneed frames. The double hung sash holds two lights each. There is a shallow, one-foot vestibule with molded paneling preceding the main entry. Old hinges remaining indicate that there was once an outer door or screening of some sort. The front door is divided, in the French manner, pierced by two tall lights with rounded arch heads, and decorated with elaborate molded panels.

The interior trim consists of wainscoting of tongue-in-groove battens and chair rail. The family room chimney piece has been restyled in the Craftsman tradition with Roman bricks and mantle piece supported by plain modillions.

The grainery was built c. 1855 and is a simple four-sided building with interior sections divided for grain storage. The basic structure of the building was built entirely with hand-hewn timbers, which were notched and pegged together providing strong support. The exterior is composed of batten siding.

The octagonal barn was built in 1913, as the original log barn was removed to make way for the Orenco spur of the Oregon Electric Railway track. The entire barn is made of cedar. There is neither a silo nor a central post in the barn. The uncluttered central haymow is made possible by a superb roof of radiating rafters. On the ground floor there are cattle stalls as an extension of the floor of mow. The second floor, which looks down over the central haymow, was also meant to store loose hay.

### Site and Environment:

The grounds, at once disciplined and romantic, are laid out in accordance with the principal landscaping aesthetic of the day, that advanced by sometime associates Andrew Jackson Downing and Calvert Vaux. An imposing approach is created by a circular fore-court lined with weeping birches and catalpa.

An orchard, including three ancient Chestnut trees, lies to the north, the filbert orchard to the south. Interspersed throughout the grounds are fir trees, walnut, cherry spirea, Japanese maple, hawthorne, Giant Arborvitae, boxwood, Silver maple, Big-Leaf maple, Flowering Quince, Cryptomeria, rhododendrons, firethorn, Oregon grape, Buddelia, holly and laurel. The undercover of perennials and herbaceous plants includes ferns, roses, iris, sweet william, columbine, violets, peonies, etc.

In addition to the landscaping around the house, there are two orchards, located on the north and south of the main entrance containing mature filbert and English walnut plantings. These trees are about twenty feet high and provide good shade.

### Description of Conditions and Alterations:

A. ☐ House- Excellent condition; altered.

Alterations in the house include the following

1. ☐ Bathroom and kitchen have been re-modeled, 1971
2. ☐ Composition roofing replaces the shakes of 100 years ago, 1975
3. ☐ Composition siding covers the original wood, 1954
4. ☐ The front porch no longer extends the length of the house, date unknown

B. ☐ Grainery – Fair condition; altered.

In the grainery a concrete floor has been poured and grain bins have been reinforced with wooden divisions and steel crossbars, c. 1948.

C. ☐ Octagon Barn – Deteriorated condition; slightly altered.

The octagon barn is missing the original cupola, otherwise it is unaltered, date unknown.

## HISTORY

(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period [preferably to the present])

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## Historical significance:

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The Imbrie Farm complex is one of the finest collections of rural architecture in Oregon. The farm house alone is one of the finest examples of Italian Villa architecture within the state. James and Robert Imbrie were among the earliest permanent settlers in Washington County. Amazingly, the family has maintained ownership of the farm to the present, and they have carefully and thoughtfully maintained all of the buildings.

The Imbrie farm has been owned and operated by five generations of the Imbrie family. The first Imbrie to migrate westward was James Imbrie, a second-generation American born citizen whose grandfather participated in the Revolutionary War. He arrived, according to family history, in 1844, and his first claim to Washington County land appeared in the Provisional Government records in May 1847.

James Imbrie's role in local history was not distinguished, but he was a successful farmer and stock raiser and a respected member of the Tualatin Plains community. In 1853 he joined with others under the leadership of Simon Reed in agitation for a territorial road which would connect the productive plains to the fast growing shipping outlets north of the Columbia. He also had a part in other political developments in his area, as Territorial Government documents show that he was a signer of a petition to fix the boundary of Champoe County, signer of a petition for a "Nehalem" County, and a signer of other petitions for miscellaneous domestic affairs.

James Imbrie's younger brother, Robert, who was born in Ohio on August 21, 1831 and later lived in Illinois, came to Oregon with his wife and mother in 1859. They took the route around the Isthmus of Panama, the same route his brother James had taken. On their arrival in Oregon they stayed with James and his family while deciding on a location for their home. Robert obtained a Land Grant and purchased a number of other claims from various neighbors until the time of his death he owned about 1,500 acres in Washington County with additional large holdings of land in Eastern Washington. Their first home was a log cabin, but in 1866 they built on the same site of the present home. Family history states that the first room to be completed was the present dining room, in order to be used for the birth of Frank on June 8, 1869.

Robert was also very active in the community affairs and at the time of his death on January 5, 1897, the Hillsboro Argus paid him great tribute, stressing his readiness to contribute benevolent purposes and give a helping hand. He was president of the Washington County Agricultural Society and quite active on various committees for the State Fair. He was also one of the original members of the Hillsboro Grange and a member of Tuality Lodge, No. 6, A.F. and A.M. Robert and his wife had twelve children, six of whom were living at the time of his death.

The property has stayed in the family line going from Robert to one of his twelve children, Frank. Frank had only one son, James Hay, who then had four sons. James Hay Imbrie's wife, Lillian Berger Imbrie, still lives at the century old home.

The architecture of each of the buildings is significant in its own right. The octagon barn, considered an oddity in the Tualatin plains area, was designed and built by Frank Imbrie in 1913. The grainery is a fine example of pioneer construction and techniques as it is entirely hand-hewn cedar timbers which are notched and pegged together. The house is an extraordinary structure for a farm house built during the early period of Oregon statehood. It is of unusual design and was obviously built by a wealthy farmer with some imagination.

The site is a well preserved example of a prosperous farm in the Post-Reconstruction Era. The combination of the existing buildings makes this one of the finest examples of late nineteenth century farm complexes in Oregon.

## RESEARCH INFORMATION

(Check all of the basic sources consulted and cite specific important sources)

- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Title Records    | <input type="checkbox"/> Census Records        | <input type="checkbox"/> Property Tax Records | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Histories      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps     | <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical Sources  | <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Files           | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obituaries       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives       | <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Photographs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Directories | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Permits      | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library        |   |

Local Library: \_\_\_\_\_ University Library: \_\_\_\_\_

Historical Society: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

## Bibliography: Sources Consulted:

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Arthur, Eric and Witney. The Barn: A Vanishing Landmark in North America. Toronto: A&W Visual Library, 1972. 253 pp.

Curly, Lottie. Oregon Donation Land Claims. Washington County Historical Library.

Imbrie, Boyd V. Genealogy of the Imbrie Family of Western Pennsylvania. Pittsburg, 1953.

Mooberry, Lester. "Discovery of Log Cabin Homes of Early Pioneers, One of the Highlights of Oregon Centennial Observance", Hillsboro Argus, May 12, 1960.

Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation. Area Investigation, Imbrie Farm Historic Site. William K. Riesland, June 13, 1966.

Sites, Ann. Barns, Barns, Barns, A Sampling of Vernacular Architecture in the Tualatin Plains Area of Oregon. Unpublished paper. Washington County Historical Society Library, December 31, 1969.

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Washington County Historical Society. Genealogical Material in Oregon Donation Land Claims, Volume II, abstracted from applications by the Genealogical Forum of Portland, Oregon, 1959.

Washington County Historical Society, "Impressions and Observations of the Journal Man", June 2, 1935.